

**Remarks Given by  
Lieutenant Governor Becky Skillman at the  
Deployment of the 122<sup>nd</sup> FW  
September 12<sup>th</sup>, 2007, Fort Wayne, Indiana**

I'm not going to stand up here and talk to you for long. I know these moments are precious, and I'm probably the last person you want to be looking at right now.

Still, I'm your Lt. Governor, and I have the responsibility to send you out with steam in your engines!

I will never be able to say how proud I am of the American military. Thank you seems like a silly thing to say when I'm looking into the faces of the men and women who protect life as we know it. It doesn't measure up to how we feel about you.

I wish you didn't have to go. I wish with all my heart that America's enemies were weak and poor and that you could stay home with your families. But our enemies are strangely powerful. They have nothing but destruction in their minds and hatred in their hearts. So we have to call on you - the good guys - to fight for us. We need you to fight them off and push them down until they have nowhere to hide but a hole in the ground!

You might lose your confidence over there. You might lose your will to fight in the heat and the struggle with homesickness. You might lose a lot of things, but one thing you can never lose is our love and support. It's just the first day now, but when you're weary of the sand and sun, wondering why on earth you left behind a nice job, a loving family and a comfortable home...I want you to remember why you're there.

Remember what they did to America.

Remember the horror of 9-11 and the lives that were lost.

Remember the bombings in Madrid and the foiled attacks in London.

Remember the faces - without remorse - of the guilty ones.

Remember the ones they've killed, our friends and loved ones.

Then I think, you'll remember why you left a beautiful place like Indiana for a tent in the desert.

Because there is such a thing as justice in this world, and we are Americans! We are uniquely equipped in this time and this place to defend and protect – whether or not everyone agrees with us. You’re fighting the right fight. You’re standing for a just cause. And we are behind you every sandy step of the way.

I want to say a word to the families who are staying behind as well. I’m just as proud of you as I am of your sons and daughters, your wives and husbands who are serving. I think in many ways staying home is the tougher job. Sometimes it’s hard to understand why our loved ones have to uproot our worlds and put themselves in harm’s way. But if they didn’t go, who would? These soldiers are trained and equipped to do this job. And it absolutely has to be done. So I have to ask you to let them go for a little while.

Hold them lightly. Hold them in prayer.

Do your duty to your country here at home and support your soldiers every way you can. They need lots of reminders of home while they’re gone, and I know you will do whatever it takes to keep their spirits up.

I want to tell you one last thing. I want you to remember this above all else while you are gone. **All that is required for the triumph of evil, is for good men and women to sit back and do nothing.**

So go over there and make us proud. And know that our prayers go with you.